

Media Advisory

National Weather Service
Des Moines, IA

May 26, 2004
2004-06

...Severe Weather Summary For May 21st Through May 24th...2004...

May 21 through 24, 2004 numerous tornadoes touched down across Iowa. In the four day period, a total of 39 tornadoes struck Iowa. This was significantly more than the annual totals in 2002 and 2003. The four day total was only 6 short of the Iowa average annual total of 45.

Tornadoes Per Day:

Friday, May 21, 2004: 15 tornadoes causing numerous injuries. The tornadoes stretched from northwest Iowa southeast into east central Iowa. The town of Bradgate suffered significant damage from a F2 (Fujita Damage Scale) rated tornado. The highest rated tornado occurred in east central Iowa in Palo where a F3 rated tornado struck.

Saturday, May 22, 2004: 19 tornadoes. No reported injuries. The tornadoes occurred in southwest and central Iowa with numerous touchdowns in central Iowa in the Des Moines vicinity. Several tornadoes were rated F1 with the remaining rated F0. For Iowa, 19 tornadoes on one day is significant and ranks 4th all time. The highest number for a single day is 27 which occurred on April 11, 2001.

Sunday, May 23, 2004. No tornadoes.

Monday, May 24, 2004. 5 tornadoes in central and southwest Iowa. No deaths or injuries were reported.

In addition to the tornadoes, numerous storms produced hail of golf ball size or larger and damaging straight line winds produced widespread damage. The most significant high wind event occurred late Saturday night when a line of storms produced significant damage from west central into central Iowa. A wind gust of 106 mph was reported south of Des Moines.

Damage surveys were conducted over the weekend by the National Weather Service and the media. Damage surveys were conducted for the east central Iowa tornadoes near Cedar Rapids, the Bradgate tornado and the damaging wind storm in Warren, Madison, Adair and Cass counties. Damage survey reports can be found on the National Weather Service Des Moines (www.crh.noaa.gov/dmx) and Quad Cities (www.crh.noaa.gov/dvn) websites.

A tornado plot map for the central Iowa tornadoes has been posted on the National Weather Service Des Moines website at www.crh.noaa.gov/dmx.

Heavy rain from the prolonged period of thunderstorms caused the most widespread and significant flooding in Iowa in several years.

For interviews concerning the tornado event, please contact Jeff Johnson at the National Weather Service in Johnston, Iowa.

This Public Information Statement will be posted on the National Weather Service Des Moines website and re-sent as a Media Advisory.

Jeff Johnson
National Weather Service
Des Moines, Iowa